

Editorial Notes**AMENDMENTS**

2018—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(2), added subsec. (a). Former subsec. (a) redesignated (b).

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(1), (3), redesignated subsec. (a) as (b), in heading, substituted “Applications” for “In general”, and, in text, substituted “3871d(d)(2)” for “3871d(d)(3)” and “program contracts” for “producer contracts” and inserted “that address 1 or more priority resource concerns for which the critical conservation area is designated” before period at end. Former subsec. (b) redesignated (c).

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(1), redesignated subsec. (b) as (c). Former subsec. (c) redesignated (e).

Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(4)(B), added par. (1). Former par. (1) redesignated (2).

Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(4)(A), (C), redesignated par. (1) as (2), added subpar. (C), redesignated subpar. (E) as (D), and struck out former subpars. (C) and (D) which read as follows:

“(C) would benefit from water quality improvement, including through reducing erosion, promoting sediment control, and addressing nutrient management activities affecting large bodies of water of regional, national, or international significance;

“(D) would benefit from water quantity improvement, including improvement relating to—

“(i) groundwater, surface water, aquifer, or other water sources; or

“(ii) a need to promote water retention and flood prevention; or”.

Subsec. (c)(3). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(4)(D), added par. (3) and struck out former par. (3). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Critical conservation area designations under this section shall expire after 5 years, subject to redesignation, except that the Secretary may withdraw designation from an area if the Secretary finds the area no longer meets the conditions described in paragraph (1).”

Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(4)(A), redesignated par. (2) as (3). Former par. (3) redesignated (4).

Subsec. (c)(4). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(4)(A), redesignated par. (3) as (4).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(5), added subsec. (d).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(1), redesignated subsec. (c) as (e).

Subsec. (e)(1). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(6)(A), substituted “program contract” for “producer contract”.

Subsec. (e)(3). Pub. L. 115-334, § 2707(6)(B), struck out par. (3). Text read as follows: “For a critical conservation area described in subsection (b)(1)(D), the Secretary may use authorities under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), other than section 14 of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1012), to carry out projects for the purposes of this section.”

CHAPTER 59—WETLANDS RESOURCES**SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Sec.	
3901.	Findings and statement of purpose.
3902.	Definitions.

SUBCHAPTER II—REVENUES FOR REFUGE OPERATIONS AND THE MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION FUND

3911.	Repealed.
3912.	Transfers to Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

SUBCHAPTER III—STATE AND FEDERAL WETLANDS ACQUISITION

3921.	National wetlands priority conservation plan.
3922.	Federal acquisition.
3923.	Restriction on use of eminent domain in acquisitions.

SUBCHAPTER IV—WETLANDS INVENTORY AND TREND ANALYSIS

3931.	National wetlands inventory project.
3932.	Reports to Congress.

SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS**§ 3901. Findings and statement of purpose****(a) Findings**

The Congress finds that—

(1) wetlands play an integral role in maintaining the quality of life through material contributions to our national economy, food supply, water supply and quality, flood control, and fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and thus to the health, safety, recreation, and economic well-being of all our citizens of the Nation;

(2) wetlands provide habitat essential for the breeding, spawning, nesting, migration, wintering and ultimate survival of a major portion of the migratory and resident fish and wildlife of the Nation; including migratory birds, endangered species, commercially and recreationally important finfish, shellfish and other aquatic organisms, and contain many unique species and communities of wild plants;

(3) the migratory bird treaty obligations of the Nation with Canada, Mexico, Japan, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and with various countries in the Western Hemisphere require Federal protection of wetlands that are used by migratory birds for breeding, wintering or migration and needed to achieve and to maintain optimum population levels, distributions, and patterns of migration;

(4) wetlands, and the fish, wildlife, and plants dependent on wetlands, provide significant recreational and commercial benefits, including—

(A) contributions to a commercial marine harvest valued at over \$10,000,000,000 annually;

(B) support for a major portion of the Nation's multimillion dollar annual fur and hide harvest; and

(C) fishing, hunting, birdwatching, nature observation and other wetland-related recreational activities that generate billions of dollars annually;

(5) wetlands enhance the water quality and water supply of the Nation by serving as groundwater recharge areas, nutrient traps, and chemical sinks;

(6) wetlands provide a natural means of flood and erosion control by retaining water during periods of high runoff, thereby protecting against loss of life and property;

(7) wetlands constitute only a small percentage of the land area of the United States, are estimated to have been reduced by half in the contiguous States since the founding of our Nation, and continue to disappear by hundreds of thousands of acres each year;

(8) certain activities of the Federal Government have inappropriately altered or assisted in the alteration of wetlands, thereby unnecessarily stimulating and accelerating the loss of these valuable resources and the environmental and economic benefits that they provide; and

(9) the existing Federal, State, and private cooperation in wetlands conservation should be strengthened in order to minimize further

losses of these valuable areas and to assure their management in the public interest for this and future generations.

(b) Purpose

It is the purpose of this chapter to promote, in concert with other Federal and State statutes and programs, the conservation of the wetlands of the Nation in order to maintain the public benefits they provide and to help fulfill international obligations contained in various migratory bird treaties and conventions with Canada, Mexico, Japan, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and with various countries in the Western Hemisphere by—

(1) intensifying cooperative efforts among private interests and local, State, and Federal governments for the management and conservation of wetlands; and

(2) intensifying efforts to protect the wetlands of the Nation through acquisition in fee, easements or other interests and methods by local, State, and Federal governments and the private sector.

(Pub. L. 99-645, § 2, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3582.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (b), was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 99-645, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3582, known as the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note below and Tables.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 99-645, § 1, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3582, provided that: “This Act [enacting this chapter, amending sections 4601-8, 4601-9, 707, 715k-3, 715k-5, and 718b of this title, and enacting a provision set out in the table under section 668dd of this title] may be cited as the ‘Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986’.”

§ 3902. Definitions

For the purpose of this chapter:

(1) The term “Committees” means the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(2) The term “designated unit” means a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System designated by the Secretary under section 3911(a)(2)¹ of this title.

(3) The term “hydric soil” means soil that, in its undrained condition, is saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during a growing season to develop an anaerobic condition that supports the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation.

(4) The term “hydrophytic vegetation” means a plant growing in—

(A) water; or

(B) a substrate that is at least periodically deficient in oxygen during a growing season as a result of excessive water content.

(5) The term “wetland” means land that has a predominance of hydric soils and that is inundated or saturated by surface or ground-water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

(Pub. L. 99-645, § 3, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3583; Pub. L. 103-437, § 6(d)(41), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4585.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 3911 of this title, referred to in par. (2), was repealed by Pub. L. 108-447, div. J, title VIII, § 813(c), Dec. 8, 2004, 118 Stat. 3390.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Par. (1). Pub. L. 103-437 substituted “Natural Resources” for “Interior and Insular Affairs” after “Committee on”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

ABOLITION OF HOUSE COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES

Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries of House of Representatives abolished and its jurisdiction transferred by House Resolution No. 6, One Hundred Fourth Congress, Jan. 4, 1995. Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries of House of Representatives treated as referring to Committee on Resources of House of Representatives in case of provisions relating to fisheries, wildlife, international fishing agreements, marine affairs (including coastal zone management) except for measures relating to oil and other pollution of navigable waters, or oceanography by section 1(b)(3) of Pub. L. 104-14, set out as a note preceding section 21 of Title 2, The Congress. Committee on Resources of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Natural Resources of House of Representatives by House Resolution No. 6, One Hundred Tenth Congress, Jan. 5, 2007.

SUBCHAPTER II—REVENUES FOR REFUGE OPERATIONS AND THE MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION FUND

§ 3911. Repealed. Pub. L. 108-447, div. J, title VIII, § 813(c), Dec. 8, 2004, 118 Stat. 3390

Section, Pub. L. 99-645, title II, § 201, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3584, related to the sale of admission permits at certain units of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

§ 3912. Transfers to Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an amount equal to the amount of all import duties collected on arms and ammunition, as specified in chapter 93 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States, shall, beginning with the next fiscal year quarter after November 10, 1986, be paid quarterly into the migratory bird conservation fund¹ established under section 718d of this title.

(Pub. L. 99-645, title II, § 203, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3586; Pub. L. 100-418, title I, § 1214(f), Aug. 23, 1988, 102 Stat. 1156.)

¹ See References in Text note below.

¹ So in original. Probably should be capitalized.

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States, referred to in text, is not set out in the Code. See Publication of Harmonized Tariff Schedule note set out under section 1202 of Title 19, Customs Duties.

AMENDMENTS

1988—Pub. L. 100-418 substituted “chapter 93 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States” for “subpart A of part 5 of schedule 7 of the Tariff Schedules of the United States”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 100-418 effective Jan. 1, 1989, and applicable with respect to articles entered on or after such date, see section 1217(b)(1) of Pub. L. 100-418, set out as an Effective Date note under section 3001 of Title 19, Customs Duties.

SUBCHAPTER III—STATE AND FEDERAL
WETLANDS ACQUISITION**§ 3921. National wetlands priority conservation plan****(a) In general**

The Secretary shall establish, and periodically review and revise, a national wetlands priority conservation plan which shall specify, on a region-by-region basis or other basis considered appropriate by the Secretary, the types of wetlands and interests in wetlands which should be given priority with respect to Federal and State acquisition.

(b) Consultation

The Secretary shall establish the plan required by subsection (a) after consultation with—

- (1) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;
- (2) the Secretary of Commerce;
- (3) the Secretary of Agriculture; and
- (4) (the chief executive officer of) each State.

(c) Factors to be considered

The Secretary, in establishing the plan required by subsection (a), shall consider—

- (1) the estimated proportion remaining of the respective types of wetlands which existed at the time of European settlement;
- (2) the estimated current rate of loss and the threat of future losses of the respective types of wetlands; and
- (3) the contributions of the respective types of wetlands to—
 - (A) wildlife, including endangered and threatened species, migratory birds, and resident species;
 - (B) commercial and sport fisheries;
 - (C) surface and ground water quality and quantity, and flood control;
 - (D) outdoor recreation; and
 - (E) other areas or concerns the Secretary considers appropriate.

(Pub. L. 99-645, title III, § 301, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3586.)

§ 3922. Federal acquisition

The Secretary is authorized to purchase wetlands or interests in wetlands, which are not ac-

quired under the authority of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929 (16 U.S.C. 715-715s), consistent with the wetlands priority conservation plan established under section 3921 of this title.

(Pub. L. 99-645, title III, § 304, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3588.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929, referred to in text, is act Feb. 18, 1929, ch. 257, 45 Stat. 1222, as amended, which is classified generally to subchapter III (§ 715 et seq.) of chapter 7 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 715 of this title and Tables.

§ 3923. Restriction on use of eminent domain in acquisitions

The powers of condemnation or eminent domain shall not be used in the acquisition of wetlands under any provision of this chapter where such wetlands have been constructed for the purpose of farming or ranching, or result from conservation activities associated with farming or ranching.

(Pub. L. 99-645, title III, § 305, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3588.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 99-645, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3582, known as the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 3901 of this title and Tables.

SUBCHAPTER IV—WETLANDS INVENTORY
AND TREND ANALYSIS**§ 3931. National wetlands inventory project****(a) In general**

The Secretary, acting through the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, shall continue the National Wetlands Inventory Project and shall—

- (1) produce, by September 30, 1988, National Wetlands Inventory maps for the areas that have been identified by the Service as top priorities for mapping, including—

- (A) the entire coastal zone of the United States;
- (B) floodplains of major rivers; and
- (C) the Prairie Pothole region;

- (2) produce, by September 30, 1998, National Wetlands Inventory maps for those portions of the contiguous United States for which final maps have not been produced earlier;

- (3) produce, by September 30, 2000, National Wetlands Inventory maps for Alaska and other noncontiguous portions of the United States;

- (4) produce, by September 30, 1990, and at ten-year intervals thereafter, reports to update and improve the information contained in the report dated September 1982 and entitled “Status and Trends of Wetlands and Deep-water Habitat in the Conterminous United States, 1950’s to 1970’s”;

(5) produce, by April 30, 1990, a report that provides—

(A) an assessment of the estimated total number of acres of wetland habitat as of the 1780's in the areas that now comprise each State; and

(B) an assessment of the estimated total number of acres of wetlands in each State as of the 1980's, and the percentage of loss of wetlands in each State between the 1780's and the 1980's;

(6) produce, by September 30, 2004, a digital wetlands data base for the United States based on the final wetlands maps produced under this section; and

(7) archive and make available for dissemination wetlands data and maps digitized under this section as such data and maps become available.

(b) Notice

The Secretary shall notify the appropriate State and local units of government at such time as he proposes to begin map preparation under subsection (a) in an area. Such notice shall include, but is not limited to, the identification of the area to be mapped, the proposed schedule for completion, and the identification of a source for further information.

(Pub. L. 99-645, title IV, § 401, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3588; Pub. L. 101-233, § 18, Dec. 13, 1989, 103 Stat. 1978; Pub. L. 102-440, title III, § 305, Oct. 23, 1992, 106 Stat. 2235.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1992—Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 102-440, § 305(1), substituted “by September 30, 2000” for “as soon as practicable”.

Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 102-440, § 305(2), which directed amendment of par. (4) by substituting a semicolon for “. And”, was executed by making the substitution for “. and”, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

Subsec. (a)(6), (7). Pub. L. 102-440, § 305(3), (4), added pars. (6) and (7).

1989—Subsec. (a)(5). Pub. L. 101-233 added par. (5).

§ 3932. Reports to Congress

(a) In general

The Secretary, in consultation and cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall prepare and submit to the committees—

(1) by March 30, 1987, a report regarding the status, condition, and trends of wetlands in the lower Mississippi alluvial plain and the prairie pothole regions of the United States; and

(2) by September 30, 1987, a report regarding trends of wetlands in all other areas of the United States.

(b) Contents of reports

The reports required under subsection (a) shall contain—

(1) an analysis of the factors responsible for wetlands destruction, degradation, protection and enhancement;

(2) a compilation and analysis of Federal statutory and regulatory mechanisms, including expenditures, financial assistance, and tax provisions which—

(A) induce wetlands destruction or degradation; or

(B) protect or enhance wetlands;

(3) a compilation and analysis of Federal expenditures resulting from wetlands destruction, degradation, protection or enhancement;

(4) an analysis of public and private patterns of ownership of wetlands;

(5) an analysis of the environmental and economic impact of eliminating or restricting future Federal expenditures and financial assistance, whether direct or indirect, which have the effect of encouraging the destruction, degradation, protection or enhancement of wetlands, including—

(A) public works expenditures;

(B) assistance programs such as price support programs, commodity loans and purchase programs and disaster assistance programs;

(C) soil conservation programs; and

(D) certain income tax provisions;

(6) an analysis of the environmental and economic impact of failure to restrict future Federal expenditures, financial assistance, and tax provisions which have the effect of encouraging the destruction, degradation, protection or enhancement of wetlands, including—

(A) assistance for normal silviculture activity (such as plowing, seeding, planting, cultivating, minor drainage, or harvesting for the production of fiber or forest products);

(B) Federal expenditures required incident to studies, evaluations, design, construction, operation, maintenance, or rehabilitation of Federal water resource development activities, including channel improvements;

(C) the commodity loans and purchases program and cotton, feed grain, wheat, and rice production stabilization programs administered by the Department of Agriculture; and

(D) Federal expenditures for the construction of publicly owned or publicly operated highways, roads, structures, or facilities that are essential links in a larger network or system; and

(7) recommendations for the conservation of wetlands resources based on an evaluation and comparison of all management alternatives, and combinations of management alternatives, such as State and local actions, Federal actions, and initiatives by private organizations and individuals.

(Pub. L. 99-645, title IV, § 402, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3589.)

CHAPTER 59A—WETLANDS

Sec.	
3951.	Definitions.
3952.	Priority Louisiana coastal wetlands restoration projects.
3953.	Louisiana coastal wetlands conservation planning.
3954.	National coastal wetlands conservation grants.
3955.	Distribution of appropriations.
3956.	General provisions.
3957.	Environmental banks.